

keeps electing Democrats. Congresswoman MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE called for States with Republican Governors to disallow people from voting if they showed an inclination to support Democrats. Our colleague, Senator RAND PAUL, said efforts to convince people to vote—if those votes resulted in Democrats winning—should be illegal.

Sensible Senate Republicans—the ones who whisper the sensible things quietly to us here on the floor of the Senate Chamber—will claim that MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE is an outlier, a fringe character, but she is exactly the opposite. She is the mainstream. She doesn't believe Joe Biden won the 2020 election, just like 7 out of 10 Republican voters. The fact that she is willing to say the quiet things out loud, it doesn't make her fringe; it makes her royalty. The best attended Republican event in my State since the 2020 election was an event headlined by MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE.

She and RAND PAUL and their ilk are the Republican Party right now. They are the healthy trunk of the tree. Sensible Senate Republicans who believe Joe Biden is a legitimate President are the dead limbs, bound to fall off soon in a slight wind.

The mainstream of today's Republican Party believes that beating Joe Biden and other Democrats is just more important than preserving democracy. So that is why they are methodically working to clean up their mistakes from 2020. They couldn't declare Joe Biden's win illegitimate because they just weren't ready on January 6. That is what January 6 was about, an attempt to postpone the certification of electors so they could get ready.

Well, in 2022 and 2024, they are going to be ready. At the heart of this plan is an attempt to just make it a whole lot harder for Democrats to vote by eliminating voting sites in Democratic neighborhoods or eliminating days to vote—days that typically Democrats vote on.

But Republicans are also preparing a secret weapon—a backup plan—if on election night, their attempts to depress Democratic turnout don't work out and a Democratic candidate for Governor or Senate or President still wins. And this backup plan is all about changing who counts the votes. It used to be that even in Republican-majority States, Democrats had a role in counting the votes, either through bipartisan panels or through the ability for cities and counties to choose their own election officials, which often meant that in Democratic counties you had Democrats in charge of counting votes and in Republican counties you had Republicans in charge of counting votes. This has been a longstanding foundation of our democracy, making sure that no one party had the monopoly on vote counting.

If both parties are engaged in the process, there is a lot more incentive

for both sides to play it safe and play it straight—but no more. In Republican-controlled State after State, the rules are being changed to put Republicans and only Republicans in charge of counting the votes and, more consequently, deciding which votes count.

Trump and his followers are making sure that only Republicans who are 100 percent loyal to Trump will be the chosen few Republicans in charge of vote counting.

Everybody has heard that phone call from 2020 in which President Trump personally lobbies the Georgia secretary of state to disqualify just enough Democratic votes in order to shift the State's electors to Trump. "I just want to find 11,780 votes," Trump pleads in that phone call. During that hour-long call, he makes it exactly clear what he wants. He wants 11,780 or more Democratic votes to be disqualified through vague made-up claims of fraud in order to flip the election. He tells you exactly what he wants on that phone call: votes to be disqualified on zero basis of fraud in order to flip the election to him.

The new State laws and the purge of straight shooters like the Georgia secretary of state from the party will make sure that in 2022 or 2024, if an election is close enough to flip to Republicans, the obstacles that were in place in 2020 will be gone.

Now, I know that every Republican Senator, and even a few Democratic Senators, think this scenario that I just outlined is hyperbolic. They think it is a scare tactic. But why would you think that? Trump and his allies aren't even trying to hide what they did or what they are doing. Trump lost the election. He lost the election by 7 million votes, and he didn't care. He did everything in his power, including using violence, to try to stay in power, despite the fact that he lost. Since then, he has cheerled all these changes in State laws.

Do any of you really think that he is doing this because he believes in good governance or clean elections? Of course, not. He has told you in words, in deeds, over and over, what his goal is, and his goal is to achieve power, whether or not he actually wins the election. He is not hiding it. His supporters, leaders of the Republican Party, are now openly calling for States to strip from Democrats, and Democrats only, the right to vote or the right to campaign for election.

This is all happening in front of your eyes, out in the open, right now. And only we—the 100 of us—have the ability to stop this. January 6 was just a preview. It was what happens because Trump and his minions hadn't done the necessary planning ahead to steal the election. They panicked, and they brought violence upon this building.

They may not need a physical rebellion in 2022 or 2024 because they will have changed the rules to make sure that Republicans loyal to Trump are installed in power, regardless of whether they win or lose the election.

None of us are helpless here in the U.S. Senate. We can pass laws that take away from States the power to disenfranchise any voters or the ability to put only one party in charge of vote counting.

A few of my Democratic Senate colleagues think that they are saving the Senate by preserving Republicans' right to stop these reforms. They are wrong. If we don't take steps right now to stop Trump's plan, there won't be a Senate left to protect. That is not hyperbole. If the loser of an election for the U.S. Senate gets seated as a Member of this body in 2023, then our democracy is effectively dead.

It is time we started actually listening to what Trump Republicans are telling us over and over again, out loud, that they are getting ready to do. They have made their choice, and they have chosen power over democracy.

I get it. It is always easier to do nothing and hope that the threat will just go away—just shut the door, box your ears, cover your eyes, and hope for the best. But we are the U.S. Senate. We are the ones that are put on the watch. We are the ones that are supposed to meet the threat head-on and stop it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. HAWLEY. Madam President, had there been a recorded vote, I would have voted no on the confirmations of Executive Calendar No. 489, Armando O. Bonilla, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years and No. 490, Carolyn N. Lerner, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

#### TRIBUTE TO TOMMY WILLIAMS

• Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Tommy Williams of Baton Rouge, LA, on his retirement from the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, LCTCS.

Serving as the executive director for governmental affairs of LCTCS for 13 years, Mr. Williams made monumental